PSC SETS HEARING SCHEDULE IN VERIZON CASE

Jefferson City (February 22, 2002)---The Missouri Public Service Commission will hold hearings in late April in a case filed by GTE Midwest Incorporated d/b/a Verizon Midwest and CenturyTel of Missouri, LLC. The joint applicants are seeking Commission authority for the transfer of certain assets from Verizon Midwest to CenturyTel of Missouri, LLC. That transfer would include all of Verizon's 98 telephone exchanges (including Columbia, Branson, Wentzville and Hermann) in Missouri. If the application is approved by the Commission, Verizon Midwest local telephone customers would become local telephone customers of CenturyTel of Missouri, LLC. Verizon serves approximately 369,000 access lines in Missouri.

Hearings, to be held in the Commission's hearing room in the Governor Office Building, 200 Madison Street, in Jefferson City, are scheduled to begin on April 25, 2002. If needed, these hearings will continue on April 26, 2002 and conclude on April 29, 2002.

Verizon Midwest and CenturyTel of Missouri, LLC state in the joint application: "The proposed transaction is not detrimental to the public interest in that CenturyTel possesses the managerial, engineering and financial expertise necessary to continue to provide the quality of service that Verizon currently provides to its customers in the enumerated exchanges. CenturyTel is committed to providing the most modern technology available."

The joint application further states: "CenturyTel proposes no immediate change in the operation of Verizon's properties as a result of the proposed transaction and, in fact, proposes to retain all of Verizon's existing employees who currently provide service to these exchanges. Moreover, CenturyTel proposes no immediate changes in the rates, terms and conditions of the telecommunications service that Verizon currently provides to customers in the enumerated exchanges."

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Case No. TM-2002-232